

## **WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

### **COMMITTEE: PARKS, RECREATION & RAILROAD**

**DATE:**           **AUGUST 17, 2006**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Supervisors      Haskell  
                      Belden  
                      Gabriels  
                      VanNess  
                      F. Thomas  
                      Stec  
                      Merlino

**COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:**

Supervisors      O'Connor  
                      Geraghty

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Pat Beland, Director - Parks, Recreation &  
                                 Railroad  
William Remington, DPW Superintendent  
William Lamy, Deputy DPW Superintendent  
Judy Johnson, DPW Fiscal Manager  
Chairman Thomas  
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board  
JoAnn McKinstry, Confidential Secretary to the  
                                 Commissioner of Administrative &  
                                 Fiscal Services  
Amanda Allen, Legislative Office Specialist

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Mr. Haskell called the meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Committee to order at 11:27 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Merlino and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2006 meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Pat Beland, Director of Parks, Recreation and Railroad, who distributed copies of his agenda to the Committee Members, a copy of which is on file with the minutes. Mr. Beland proceeded with Item number one of his agenda, an update on the Railroad Rehabilitation Project, PIN# 1821 H890-219. He said that final certification had been received on the railroad crossing signals and the final payments were to be made. Mr. Beland advised that the focus of the project would now be the railroad stations.

Moving to Item number two, Mr. Beland apprised that there had been a change in the funds granted by New York State for the snowmobile trails. He said that the funding had been decreased by 10.3% and he expected the check from the New York State Treasurers Office to reflect the decrease. Mr. Beland added that the snowmobile clubs had been advised of the funding reduction.

Item number three of the agenda, Mr. Beland stated, were pending items from past Committee meetings; the first of these, he said, was the purchase of the caboose and train station at the Riparius location. He advised that the purchase of a parcel of land for the train station was proceeding and noted that there would be a resolution presented at the August 18<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to accept the administrative settlement of the property. Mr.

Beland anticipated that Warren County would close on the desired site before the end of 2006. He advised that the details of the caboose purchase had not been discussed and he suggested that the issue be addressed in the near future to allocate funds and close the project by the end of the year. Mr. Haskell agreed and decided that the issue should be addressed in the next Committee meeting, at which time a source of funding would be determined to purchase the caboose.

Mr. Beland advised that the second pending item was the new building for the Soil & Water Conservation District Office. He said that the building could not be erected on the Warren County Fish Hatchery property as initially suggested and asked if there were any other suggestions for placement of the building. Mr. Haskell apprised that he and William Lamy, Deputy DPW Superintendent, had discussed the possibility of utilizing space available at the Warren County DPW building (in Warrensburg) and the possible pollution concerns of placing the building at that site. Mr. Lamy advised that William Remington, DPW Superintendent, had some updated information to present on the subject. Mr. Remington apprised that the site initially proposed by Mr. Lamy was not usable because the area had previously housed a septic system and two fuel tanks. However, he said, there was an appropriate location directly behind the site on the back corner of the DPW property. Mr. Haskell asked if the site was considered wetland property and Mr. Remington replied that it was not. Mr. Remington added that the site was currently paved and only a storm drain existed and could be easily worked around. He added that he did not anticipate any environmental concerns from the use of the site he proposed.

Mr. F. Thomas recalled that at one time there was the possibility of the Town of Warrensburg offering a piece of property for Warren County's use; however, he said, he was unsure of the details. Mr. Haskell advised that the property in question was located at Ash Park and entailed various restrictions. Mr. Lamy added that in prior years he had contacted the Town of Warrensburg with respect to the use of the property for storm water improvements and was advised that the Park had been conveyed to the Town of Warrensburg with restrictions which would need to be reviewed prior to any action being taken.

Mr. Haskell advised that a meeting would need to be scheduled with Dave Wick, District Manager of the Soil & Water Conservation District, to discuss the plans for the new building. It was Mr. Haskell's feeling that the building could be constructed using Warren County manpower rather than putting the job out for bid; saving a considerable amount of money in the process. Mr. Haskell noted that the foundation of the building would require hiring a contractor because Warren County could not provide those services. Mr. Haskell said that once a meeting was held with Mr. Wick and the exact dimensions of the building decided, he would speak with Mr. Remington to be sure that the area available at the Warrensburg DPW site was large enough to accommodate the building.

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General discussion ensued between Committee members with respect to the construction of the new Soil & Water Conservation District Office.

Returning to the agenda, Mr. Beland presented his budget to the Committee. He advised that the Parks and Recreation (A.7110) Budget reflected a 2007 request of \$1,003,681 as compared to 2006 appropriations of \$971,559, an increase of \$32,122. Mr. Stec noted that the increase was approximately 3%. Mr. Beland said that there were several increases which he would explain to the Committee. He advised that under Code A.7110 413 (Repair and Maintenance - Bldg./Property), \$40,000 was requested and was approximately \$5,000 more than what was budgeted in 2006. Mr. Beland said that the request was increased due to the costs of the railroad project. He noted that Code A.7110 416 (Oil and Gas - Heating) was also increased approximately \$1,200 in anticipation of rising fuel costs.

Because the costs of fish food had increased, Mr. Beland advised the amount requested under Code A.7110 445 (foods), had increased significantly from \$16,800 in 2006 to \$22,000 for the proposed 2007 budget, an increase of \$5,200. He apprised that in 2006 the Fish Hatchery had broken all prior records in terms of production, size and number of fish. Mr. Beland added that he had received more phone calls commending the fishing in Warren County than ever before.

Mr. Beland explained that \$309,400 was proposed under Code A.7110 470 (Contract), which consisted of \$100,000 for the snowmobile clubs and \$204,400 for the acquisition costs of the railroad from North Creek to the Warren County line. He noted that the funds earmarked for acquisition costs had been rolled over in the budget for the past two years and would remain as such until needed. Mr. Haskell advised that \$100,000 was needed for the snowmobile clubs because there were now four clubs rather than three, as the Town of Hague had started a club.

Mr. Belden stated that he felt at least 50% of the funds for the snowmobile clubs should come from the Occupancy Tax Fund and Mr. Stec agreed. Mr. Haskell said he also agreed but noted that there was not enough in the Occupancy Tax Fund to cover those costs.

General discussion ensued.

Mr. VanNess questioned the increase shown under Code A.7110 421 (Equipment Rental), noting that the 2007 proposed budget reflected an increase of approximately \$5,800. Judy Johnson, Fiscal Manager, responded stating that the totals were directly related to their machinery fund; she said that they had tried to make the equipment rentals figure accurate for what was actually used from their reserve.

Motion was made by Mr. Belden, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to approve the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Budget, authorize the Committee Chairman

to sign them and submit same to the Budget Officer.

Mr. Beland outlined a page of his budget reflecting the prior years revenues and those estimated for 2007. He noted that Code A.7110 3889 (Parks and Recreation, Other) was to reflect the snowmobile grant from New York State but would remain blank until the funding was received because he was not certain of the total amount.

Moving on to Up Yonda Farm (A.7111), Mr. Beland advised that the Budget reflected a 2007 request of \$209,880 as compared to the 2006 appropriations of \$199,180, an increase of \$10,700. He explained that Code A.7111 200 (Equipment), reflected an increase due to the need for various items such as a snowblower and a freezer which were pieces of equipment acquired with the Farm. Mr. Beland advised that the salary portion of the budget reflected a request to increase the base salary of Dean Moore, who was a long time employee and Naturalist of the Farm, from \$30,415 to \$35,415. Mr. Haskell noted that Mr. Moore retained a Bachelor's Degree and the increase was not unreasonable for a man with knowledge such as his. The Committee was in agreement with Mr. Beland's request to increase the base salary for Dean Moore, Naturalist at Up Yonda Farm, as outlined above.

Mr. W. Thomas entered the meeting at 11:44 a.m.

Mr. Beland apprised the Committee that the trust fund held for Up Yonda Farm would not support full reimbursement for the program and suggested that the fund be left to grow. Mr. Haskell said that he and a few of the other Committee members had met with representatives from the trust department and were advised that the fund needed to be three times its current size to fulfill its purpose. He noted that the bank was very restricted in how they could invest the funds and as such, its growth had also been restricted. Mr. Haskell advised that it was the consensus of the Committee to provide the funds necessary to operate Up Yonda Farm from the General Fund in order to allow the trust fund to grow.

General discussion ensued with respect to the trust fund.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to provide necessary funds to operate Up Yonda Farm for 2007 from the General Fund to allow the trust fund to grow and to evaluate the decision on an annual basis. The request was referred to the Finance Committee.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Belden and carried unanimously to approve the Up Yonda Budget, authorize the Committee Chairman to sign them and submit same to the Budget Officer.

Moving on, Mr. Beland reiterated that the snowmobile budget could not be determined until the grant funds were received from New York State.

Mr. Beland advised that the Railroad portion of the budget reflected expenses to offset revenues with a 2007 request of \$33,500 as compared to the 2006 appropriation of \$24,000, an increase of \$9,500. He said that the only noteworthy item was that the budget included funds to hire a private consultant to overview the entire railroad to be sure that all maintenance and upkeep procedures were being done.

Motion was made by Mr. VanNess, seconded by Mr. Stec and carried unanimously to approve the Railroad Budget, authorize the Committee Chairman to sign them and submit same to the Budget Officer.

As there was no further business to come before the Parks, Recreation and Railroad Committee, on motion made by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. VanNess, Mr. Haskell adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amanda Allen, Legislative Office Specialist